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Fiftieth Anniversary Year

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NEWS & VIEWS

Sackcloth and Ashes

The new self-candidness of the media reached dizzying heights for *Time* magazine, when CBS' *60 Minutes* program needled its own network for tampering with the good will and judgment of journalists by indulging in the providing of gratuities, junkets and other favors in hopes of flavoring coverage.

60 Minutes zinged CBS policy allowing "mad money" on top of expenses to TV reporters it flies to New York to screen new shows. The zinging was important enough to *Time* to rate almost two columns of space.

Media impulses towards self-criticism and confession of mistakes have been on the increase for some time now. It has been duly noted, for instance, that a regular feature of an increasing number of daily newspapers, including the *New York Times*, is a corrections' box handling errors from the most embarrassing to the most trivial.

Cited have been misspelled names and wedding stories in which the bride is "married" to her father-in-law.

The current record for intramural candidness is held, however, by the *Washington Post*, for its Jan. 24 editorial-page essay taking the paper to task for the way it handled the gaffe which had Senator Goldwater saying that Richard Nixon "is probably the best President we have had in this century," when in fact Goldwater had been referring to Harry Truman.

The blooper originated with the *Washington Post*'s Tim O'Brien and was processed to 225 client papers of the *Post*, thus seeding the error nationwide. The next day the *Post* ran a two-column erratum box "out front," but for *Post* columnist Robert C. Maynard this was not enough.

"Even though front-page corrections are rare," he wrote, "the questions remain whether the *Post* did enough to defuse those time bombs its mistake created."

Maynard is of the opinion that a front-page news story would have better served the moment—and history. "The box, prominent as it was, was rather cryptic as a way of communication," Maynard commented, "and it is possible that a front-page news story might have turned the trick and possibly attracted the attention of some of those editors who ignored the correction box the *Post* news service moved on its wires.

"It wouldn't have taken all that much to have explained the origins of the mistake because they were fairly simple: human error."

Post editors apparently did consider a story the next day acknowledging the mistake and going on to explain why Goldwater considered Truman the greatest of the century's Presidents, but the plan fell through when Goldwater could not be reached to discuss the matter.

Maynard refuses, however, to let the editors off the hook, noting that they still did not consider a story that told how the mistake occurred in the first place.

That nettled him—along with the failure of some papers that carried the original story to print the correction. He named two: the Lorain (Ohio) *Journal* and the Rock Island (Ill.) *Argus*.

Outmoded Policy

U.S. denial of visas to Cuban film-makers Thomas Gutierrez Alea and Saul Yelin has brought a much deserved protest from Father J. Bryan Hehir, director of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Division for Justice and Peace, and from Father Frederick A. McGuire, C.M., director of the Division for Latin America.

Gutierrez Alea and Yelin had sought visas to attend the annual awards ceremony in New York of the National Society of Film Critics, at which Gutierrez Alea's *Memories of Undevelopment* was being honored. The State Department turned down the requests under terms consonant with the Organization of American States' policy of isolating Cuba.

"It is ironic, at least," said Hehir and McGuire, "that the film . . . has been allowed to be distributed throughout the United States while its director cannot even attend an awards ceremony in the Algonquin Hotel."

Hehir and McGuire added:

"We consider this a totally outmoded and inappropriate policy whose effects are almost entirely negative. From a short range point of view it unjustly discriminates against those persons, both North American and Cuban, who have in good faith either extended or received invitations to visit in the United States for legitimate and laudable reasons. In the long range, it continues to deprive our two peoples of the necessary opportunity of learning more about each other and of thus breaking down the walls of needless hostility that presently divide us. Not only the people of Cuba but we ourselves are thereby isolated, and to that extent impoverished, by this short-sighted policy."

The protest was addressed to Jack B. Kubish, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Department of State.

"I'm going to fight like hell."

Mixed Reception

American dioceses are reporting disparate degrees of interest in the permanent diaconate program.

The Milwaukee archdiocese recently launched its first training class and drew 125 applicants, some of whom elected to wait until the formation of a second class in about a year's time. "We were overwhelmed by the level of interest," said Father Paul M. Esser, program director.

St. Louis archdiocese, on the other hand, reports minimal interest in the permanent diaconate, and will not advance tentative plans for a training program until stronger interest is evidenced.

Auxiliary Bishop Joseph A. McNicholas commented that "unless I bring up the topic myself, nobody talks about it." He speculated that the appointment of extraordinary ministers of the sacrament of the Eucharist may have diminished the demand for permanent deacons.

Odds and Ends

—A *Washington Post* letter-writer's reaction to the news photo showing Richard Nixon feeding his dog, King Timahoe, his birthday cake, as members of the royal family and court looked on in amusement: "How many readers were reminded, as I was of an incident in 18th century France? When starving citizens who have paid out heavy taxes to support the extravagances of their rulers begged for bread, a noble lady (thought by some to be Marie Antoinette) retorted, 'Let them eat cake!' "

—The *New York Times*' program-schedule comment on Channel 11's 11 a.m. movie for Jan. 25, *Henry Aldrich for President*: "Why, come to think about it, not?"

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Women & the Church

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: As a woman Catholic seminarian I am in hearty agreement with Clara Henning's conviction as stated in her article on "Women in the Priesthood" [Jan. 11] that all Catholic women, religious and lay, need to unite to demand their rights as baptized Catholics.

I would hope, however, that women struggling together in the Church would not define their prospects for effecting change solely by the prevailing cultural and theological horizons of the Church. I believe that our work is and will be the work of the Spirit and thus more powerful than the negativity characterizing many contemporary attitudes toward women in the Church.

I am convinced that it is against this background that the urgency with which Catholic women are communicating their oppression today is seen at its deepest level—that of faith. Our response to the Gospel promise of equality for all humans is in a very real sense an unconditional one.

Women working together can impress upon the Church that our plight is a very serious one indeed. I fervently hope that our response will be no less serious.

REGINA A. GRIFFIN
Weston College School of Theology

Detroit, Mich.

To the Editors: Clara Maria Henning is, of course, right in her opinion that women still are not equal to men in the Catholic Church [Jan. 11]. As a priest who is trying to be open-minded and actively encouraging in this matter, I am often frustrated and embarrassed when women constantly end up as second-class churchpersons in the various decrees and practices of the Church, as well as in the attitudes of so many fellow priests.

Ms. Henning has missed a few breakthroughs. Girls *are* serving Mass

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STATE OF THE PRESIDENT

We now know how President Nixon views the state of the union. To no one's surprise, he sees it in a rosier light than most of the rest of us. A State of the Union message is, after all, as much a campaign document as a series of legislative proposals, especially at the hands of a very political President like Mr. Nixon. His speech therefore was a mixture of the sensible and the banal, with a heavy dose of clichés and not-so-pious platitudes. It showed Mr. Nixon at his best, as in his emphasis on relaxed tensions with the Soviet Union and China; and also at his worst, as when he felt called upon to describe a perfectly sound scheme for welfare reform in obnoxious terms slanted for the prejudices of middle America. Some of the proposals were good—one can hope, for instance, that national health insurance in some form is an idea whose time has come. Others were bizarre—i.e., the deep concern for the cause of personal privacy expressed unblushingly by the Greatest Wiretapper of Them All.

As far as legislative proposals go, then, the President's message was about par for the political course. But what everyone waited for, of course, was a clue to Mr. Nixon's current attitude on Watergate. When this shirttail to the President's speech finally came, his remarks betrayed that he still fails to grasp the central point, which is that he himself is part of the problem, not the solution. "One year of Watergate is enough," Mr. Nixon asserted. Few would disagree with this judgment on a sordid drama that has shamed the nation. The crux of the problem, however, is whether and to what extent the President of the United States was involved in criminal acts carried out by his closest associates. That issue must be resolved, and, as Senator Ervin pointed out, it would have been settled months ago if Mr. Nixon had not consistently withheld vital evidence. It is natural that the President would like to see Watergate forgotten, but that is obviously out of the question. Indeed, things are likely to get considerably worse for Mr. Nixon long before they have any chance of getting better. True, the Watergate committee has deferred to the courts and is temporarily silenced, but there will be little in the trial of former Cabinet members Mitchell and Stans to give the President much comfort. At the same time, the House Judiciary Committee will continue to lay the groundwork for impeachment, backed up by strong subpoena powers. Finally, under the leadership of Leon Jaworski, the

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special prosecutor's office will soon be producing additional criminal indictments against former and perhaps present Administration officials. These and the trials that follow will produce a spate of headlines. This is bad enough for Mr. Nixon, but there is another and even greater danger for him—that any or all of those who face jail may decide to tell all in exchange for leniency. If any do, and if they give away more secrets the Administration would like to keep to itself, the last state of the White House will be worse than the first.

April 15 is a date that must hang over Mr. Nixon's head far more than over that of the average taxpayer—entirely aside from whether or not the President can this year continue his genius for paying minimal taxes. It is hard to see how even the most dedicated Nixon apologist can deny that the President's handling of his personal finances smacks of sharp practice at best and of possibly grave wrongdoing at worst. Given the disclosures to date, few taxpayers can escape the conviction that conduct in tax matters even remotely resembling that of the President would plunge them into very deep trouble indeed. The issues raised by Watergate are undoubtedly far more serious, but as the April 15th income-tax deadline draws near, it is the tax issue which is likely to dominate in the average taxpayer's mind.

Basically, what is involved is a crisis of confidence, exacerbated by news stories of missing tapes, erased segments and explanations that do not explain. Much remains to be discovered, but for months now it has been obvious that a pattern of incredible arrogance, lawbreaking and gross abuse of power existed at the highest levels of our government, among men chosen and appointed by Richard Nixon. In most things political the American people are amazingly tolerant, but they are jealous of the integrity of the White House, and it is for this reason that popular support for Mr. Nixon has fallen to its present abysmal low. Mr. Nixon was undoubtedly correct in stating that the present state of the union poses great challenges, and so the critical question remains: in a society like ours which is dependent on mutual confidence among citizens and groups, how can a President who has so thoroughly lost the trust of his fellow-citizens continue to function?

COMING: An article by David S. Toolan in the Religious Book Issue on divorce and remarriage

Peru: Creeping At a Petty Pace

Five years of reformist military rule have put Peru into the post-oligarchic era. Stringent agrarian reform and increasing state control of the economy and political life have stripped the once mighty upper class of its dominance over national affairs. Now the self-styled "Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces" is faced with the nitty-gritty of restructuring society according to new rules.

At this stage, the revolution seems to be creeping at a petty pace. In some instances, it has even backtracked from initial anti-imperialist and radical-sounding proposals.

The bogging-down is due to two basic reasons: the lack of a clear-cut ideology because of splits within the military; and the need to attract foreign capital.

When the military took over Oct. 3, 1968, the issue was nationalism. The elected civilian government had capitulated to the interests of International Petroleum Co. (IPC), a subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey. IPC had exercised subsoil rights for over 40 years through exemptions from having to comply with Peruvian law reserving these rights for the state. The military quickly nationalized the company, gaining overwhelming national support.

Added to this nationalism was a genuine desire among coup leaders to reform the basic socio-economic and political structures which favored foreign business interests and the small land-holding oligarchy at the expense of the masses. A series of measures turned large plantations over to worker cooperatives, gave the state control of banking and the marketing of major exports and restricted foreign participation in domestic business operations.

These measures, however, were never accompanied by a clearly defined ideology except to say that Peru is seeking a third way between capitalism and Communism. What the government seems headed for is a state capitalism in which the masses increase their share of the take by organizing into cooperatives and worker communities. Practical politics rather than philosophical orientation are the paving stones of this approach. And right now practical politics in Peru is the art of what you can get away with.

The man responsible for orchestrating this political jockeying is President Juan Velasco Alvarado, the highest ranking army officer at the time of the coup. Domestically, he has had to maintain the visible unity of the military despite the less than reformist mentality of many of his colleagues. Many military men supported the coup because they wanted to end the embarrassing reputation

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of the armed forces as handmaidens of the oligarchy and to better their own lot. Velasco has had to buy their continued support by increasing military expenditures, raising salaries and purchasing bigger and better war toys. The power struggles within the military are reflected in the periodic ministerial changes by which Velasco tries to balance off opposing forces while keeping everyone's finger in the pie.

Velasco's ability as a barracks politician became evident early last year when the government became virtually paralyzed for four months while he recuperated from an emergency leg amputation. The military couldn't agree on who should temporarily sign decrees. They even argued over who should perform the protocol function of receiving the credentials of newly arrived diplomats.

Velasco's position has been greatly enhanced since the Chilean coup as his calls for unity to preserve the Peruvian revolution are more readily acceptable now. Peru attributes the Chilean coup to the hard-and-fast opposition to social change which divided the country and paralyzed it through a series of strikes. Although Peru's reforms are clearly different from those attempted by Salvador Allende, Peru sees the divide and conquer tactic as the main approach of domestic reactionaries and imperialist interests to topple reformist governments. Velasco's balancing act has made him the rallying point of the moderates, committed to enacting reforms at a slow but steady pace. Since the coup, moderates have become more disposed to military use of the iron fist to put down government opponents.

The government blames opposition on the ultra-right and the ultra-left which it claims have formed a pact of convenience to topple the present government. According to government definition, the ultra-right is composed of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) political party, traditional enemy of the military. Although APRA has never held the Presidency, it is the most important political party in modern Peruvian history. The ultra-left is defined as Castroite and Chinese-line Marxists advocating class warfare.

The military has met the challenge by deporting opposition figures and intervening militarily to put down strikes. Although the iron fist has produced relatively little bloodshed, it is an overreaction to the real power of the opposition. The Peruvian analysis fails to acknowledge that in Chile a civilian government was overthrown by the military, while in Peru the military are already in power and cannot be overthrown except from within the ranks.

The current running to middle ground, however, does not erase the real ideological differences within the government. These range from a desire to permanently institutionalize the military in power to advocacy of non-Marxist socialism.

These differences result in spotty application of reform laws and a watering down of many measures by the subsequent passage of regulations modifying the decrees. It is a tribute to Velasco's ability to negotiate over the pork-barrel that the government has been able to enforce such landmark measures as agrarian reform and state control of the economy.

Besides divisions within the military, Peru is faced with the need to attract foreign capital if it is to develop its domestic projects. This means the politics of compromise as the government has to deal with U.S.-dominated lending institutions, such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank and foreign investors interested in repatriating profits rather than fostering social development.

The U.S. is interested in keeping Peru from straying outside the orbit of U.S. influence. This coupled with a foreign policy of protecting U.S. business abroad caused the U.S. to use its pull to keep Peru from getting loans. Peru complained that because of the IPC situation, the U.S. cut it off from international lending institutions. Although Peru remained firm in the IPC case, the message came through. The government now avoids using the words socialism and nationalization in discussing domestic plans. The result has been an easing of purse strings, but for projects to improve service rather than restructure society.

Peru is also trying to entice foreign capitalists by showing a willingness to drop its guard. The industrial law, for instance, sets a timetable by which majority control of a foreign subsidiary has to be transferred to Peruvian hands (private or state). It also establishes worker communities composed of all the salaried employees who eventually will own 50 percent of the company. However, the government designed an escape clause by which foreign investors can sign special contracts with the state superseding the law if the state deems the investment in the national interest.

Foreign interest has centered mostly on Peru's potentially oil-rich jungle region. To overcome the IPC scare, Peru has offered relatively liberal terms in comparison with other oil-producing countries. Peru grants foreign firms from 43 to 50 percent of the oil pumped for the duration of the contract as compared to Venezuela which reserves 85 percent for the state.

Because of the world energy crisis, though, Peru has decided recently not to sign further jungle contracts with foreign companies, giving it breathing space to reassess its policy. This indicates a Peruvian readiness to squeeze back at the international community when it has the advantage.

Peru is learning that in international dealings, practical politics is also the art of what you can get away with.

AGOSTINO BONO

(Agostino Bono writes frequently on Latin American affairs for U.S. publications.)

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JUST WAR THEORY: A QUESTION

PETER STEINFELS

IT IS MOCKERY to speak of the war in Vietnam as "over"—mockery of those still fighting and dying, still in exile or prison; those left dangling in mourning or dwindling hope for the dead and missing, those whose shattered minds or bodies will bear the war's signature till the end of their days. But no war could be more "over" than this one. The compulsion to forget, to cloak our shame, has been palpable. Last spring, I wrote about the problem of "reconciliation." Such reflections seem silly now. Reconciliation? Whatever were we divided about?

Of course I do not really know how good it is for nations to brood over their darker deeds. As a rule, we prefer other nations to do it: Germany, France, the Soviet Union. For them it is "healthy" to come to terms with their outbreaks of barbarism; these should be written into the textbooks and marked in public ceremony. For us it is probably "unhealthy," serving to keep wounds open, to feed neurotic guilt and self-righteousness. The double standard.

Whatever the best course for the nation in general, it would be a terrible failure for "men of knowledge" to slip into this convenient somnolence. Writing in *Worldview* last July, Gordon C. Zahn put the point sharply: "If we are to treat the war as if it is indeed over, this is the time to make certain that all the loose ends are tied and its lessons made explicit before the books are closed and the whole tragic affair filed away in the archives." Professor Zahn proposed that an international tribunal of theologians and other scholars of religious values meet to render a definitive moral judgment on the Vietnam war. He is of the opinion that such a judgment would involve a retrospective application of the just war theory to Vietnam and that the outcome of this exercise would be the deserved demise of that venerable theory.

I cannot say that I follow Zahn on this last point. He seems to be saying that by failing to apply their theory retrospectively to modern wars like World War II or Vietnam, just war theorists have avoided recognizing that none of these modern wars could possibly meet the theory's criteria. If this contention were true, it still does not appear to detract from the just war theory, however much it may detract from the theorists.

In fact, it was on the basis of just war theory that the editors of this journal, among others, came to the conclusion that the war in Vietnam was unjust. We did not qualify as theologians or official Church leaders, of course, the groups to whom Zahn primarily addresses his criticism; but then the difference between them and us may have been only that we took the just war theory more seriously rather than less.

I did not mean to defend the theory, however, except to the extent of arguing that re-examining it is at least worth the bother. For in trying to look back, as Zahn would want me to do, at how we applied the just war theory to Vietnam, I come up with a peculiar question, a "loose end."

Commonweal condemned the war in Vietnam primarily on the grounds of disproportionality: the violence wreaked was out of all proportion with any good end in view. The trouble with the principle of proportionality is that it is very difficult to apply prospectively, that is, a considerable amount of violence must be wrought before one can very persuasively conclude that the violent means are out of proportion to the ends pursued (which have, in return, a way of appearing most praiseworthy until the rhetoric is melted into reality by the heat of battle). But when one does perceive a disproportion in terms of what has already been done, one encounters a problem. To use the language of one text in cost-benefit analysis (a sophisticated way for measuring proportionality): "Historical or sunk costs . . . represent a sacrifice which is over and done with. Although they have a bearing on future development, their amount cannot possibly weigh in favor of one future course of action as opposed to another." In other words, the disproportion of violence to possible benefits in the past does not tell us anything for sure about the future. Indeed the advocates of a war will usually respond that given all the effort waged so far, it will only take a little more to win the cause—and this, they say, is all that should be taken into consideration. Sometimes, of course, this is obviously untrue (e.g., in 1967, in Vietnam); but sometimes it is not (in 1972, in Vietnam?), and most of the time it is hard to know one way or the other. The just war theorist can answer that the nation has *already* committed too much violence, that the war is *already* unjust and will continue to be so no matter what the proportion between ends and means from here on. His opponent simply replies, "That's all irrelevant. Maybe that war was unjust. It's the 'new' war from now on that we're worried about."

I called this a "peculiar" question. It is peculiar because it seems so abstract, a matter of logic-chopping. In fact, I believe that the man-in-the-street is a natural just war theorist; and that this gap in the logic accounts for his willingness to give the war-makers another chance.

So now I yield the floor—to the international tribunal.

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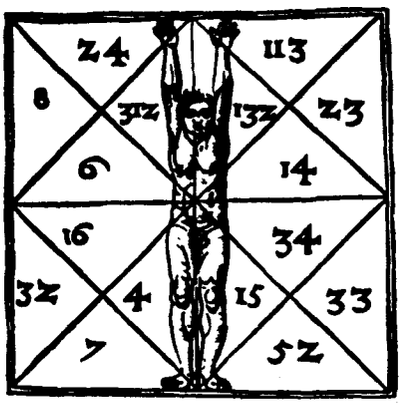
CATHOLIC HOMOSEXUALS

GREGORY BAUM



The self-affirmation of gay Catholics raises many theological questions

A few years ago a group of Catholic homosexuals, men and women, formed an association in Los Angeles to give witness to the Catholic Church that it is possible to be both Catholic and gay. The association wanted to provide help for homosexuals, men and women, to enter a mature life of faith and to find the self-acceptance necessary for a fruitful life. They called this association Dignity. Several people who joined the association were concerned about the problems of the gay community without being gay themselves. A newsletter, also named Dignity, dealt with the issue of homosexuality and Catholic life. Since then, chapters of Dignity have been formed in various cities of the U.S. On a weekend of September 1973, Dignity held its first national meeting in Los Angeles. The National Office of Dignity is at 755 Boylston Street, Room 514, Boston, Mass. 02116.

This self-affirmation of gay Catholics raises many theological questions. Dignity describes its Christian basis in a statement of position and purpose that is part of its projected constitution. Since a theological evaluation of the movement must take this basis into consideration, I shall quote several paragraphs from the text.

"We believe that Gay Catholics are members of Christ's Mystical Body, numbered among the people of God. We have an inherent dignity because God created us, Christ died for us, and the Holy Spirit sanctified us in baptism, making us his temple, and the channel through which the love of God might become visible.

"We believe that Gays can express their sexuality in a manner that is consonant with Christ's teachings. We believe that all sexuality should be exercised in an ethically responsible and unselfish way.

"As members of Dignity we wish to promote the cause of the Gay community. To do this, we must accept our responsibility to the Church, to society and to individual Gay Catholics. 1. To the Church: to work for the development of its sexual theology and for the acceptance of Gays as full and equal members of the one Christ. 2. To society: to work for justice and social acceptance through education and legal reform. 3. To individual Gays: to re-inforce their self-acceptance and their sense of dignity—and to aid them in becoming more active members of Church and society."

The creation of Dignity is a challenge to Catholic theology. What is impressive, quite apart from any theological evaluation, is the tone and sincerity of the Dignity statement and the courage of the men and women involved in this movement. Since society inflicts various kinds of penalties on homosexuals, from legal prosecution to social prejudice, these men and women deserve admiration. Also the people involved in Dignity who do not regard themselves as gay but wish to participate in the movement for apostolic reasons, betray an uncommon courage. But what is, quite apart from good will and generosity, the theological evaluation of Dignity? How does Catholic theology today look upon homosexual men and women?

The traditional position is only too well known. Homosexuality has always been rejected as an unnatural vice. In patriarchal communities such as Israel, homosexuality among men was vehemently repudiated as undermining the dignity of the male and the very structure of society. Jesus was silent about homosexuality, but the Apostle Paul followed the teaching of the Hebrew tradi-

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tion. While there had been a certain practice of pederasty in Greek society, the Christian Church repudiated homosexuality in any form as in direct opposition to the natural and social order. Homosexuality was regarded as a sin against nature and as such abhorrent. This has been the voice of tradition.

Problematic

In recent years, however, the argument from nature has become somewhat problematic in Catholic theology. The reason for this is not the influence of existentialism or what is sometimes called situation ethics—this represents too individualistic an emphasis to fit into the Catholic tradition—but, rather, the realization, derived from the analysis of culture and society, that what is called human nature has a history and is, in part at least, created by people, their interaction and their symbolic language. Human nature is not simply a given. It is a given for the individual born into a specific environment, but looked upon historically and collectively, human nature has been created by the actions of people bound together by institutions and a common set of symbols.

For this reason, theologians hold that what is called human nature in various cultures must be looked at critically. Since it has been produced over a long period of time, it may include elements that are dehumanizing. Since a culture usually calls 'human nature' the self-understanding of the dominant class and since this usage then greatly extends the ideals and the power of this class, the theologian must try to discern in the inherited, historically constituted human nature the possible structures of oppression, legitimating various forms of what Hegel has called master-slave relationships. Thus, the Catholic theologian dealing with the relationship of men and women has become suspicious of the old arguments from nature. Is not much talk about the nature of men and women a legitimation of the superior power men hold in our culture?

God's judgment, enabling us to discern the structures of evil in this world, rests even on man's historically constituted nature. Christians believe, of course, that divine grace and the divine call are also operative in man's making of man in the various cultural traditions: but theologians wish to be equally aware of the dehumanizing elements woven into our cultural ideals and institutions. In other words, human nature as it is at present is not normative for theologians: they want to detect in it possible reflections of the master-slave relationship. What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned, which is defined in terms of mutuality. This, at least, is the promise of biblical religion.

Are we certain that homosexuality in men and women is against nature? Is the prohibition against homosexuality, constant in our cultural and religious heritage, a protection of the good and holy in human life? Or is it a legitimation of the inherited social structure which assigns men and women definitive and unequal places? Since human nature is historical, since, in other words people over the centuries have participated in the creation of human nature through the institutionalization and symbolization of their lives, the old argument against homosexuality based on human nature will have to be re-examined.

The recent discovery that symbols and institutions enter into people's historical self-constitution affects theological reflection on homosexuality from another point of view. Studying the effects of society on consciousness, we have become keenly aware that the radical rejection of homosexuality and the taboos surrounding it in religious and secular culture inflict unspeakable burdens on the men and women who discover themselves as homosexuals. People who are held in contempt by society, marginalized by custom, vilified by a vulgar or subtle language of exclusion, and judged as sick, as immoral, as perverts, will in one way or another internalize these judgments in the form of self-rejection and self-hatred. Homosexual men and women belong to the most oppressed of all groups in society. For while other groups exposed to contempt and rejection can find in their own tradition sources of pride and self-respect, homosexuals are led to believe in the perversity of their own nature and deprived of the very ground of their self-respect. Seeing a collective crime of such proportions and the violence inflicted on homosexual men and women, the theologian begins to suspect that the traditional arguments against homosexuality were not so much based on a sound concept of nature as summoned forth by God's call, as on a refusal to take a look at the foundations of our culture.

Let me add that these reflections on the power of society to create consciousness also put a question mark behind a good deal of psychological research done on homosexuality. For who knows whether the behavior patterns of homosexuals in our society, especially their inner conflicts, their hang-ups, their debilitating fears, are due to the special nature of homosexuality or, rather, to the wounds inflicted on them by a hostile society? Could it be that the psychological problems of homosexual men and women tell us more about the exclusion patterns of society than about the nature of the homo-erotic orientation?

What, then, do we know about homosexuality? The psychological literature does not provide us with many answers regarding the nature and origin of homosexuality. In his book, *Leonardo da Vinci,* Sigmund Freud proposes a theory relating the origin of the homo-erotic orientation to certain experiences and conflicts in early childhood; he adds, however, that this theory may be applicable to some homosexuals only and that what goes under the common name of homosexuality may in fact

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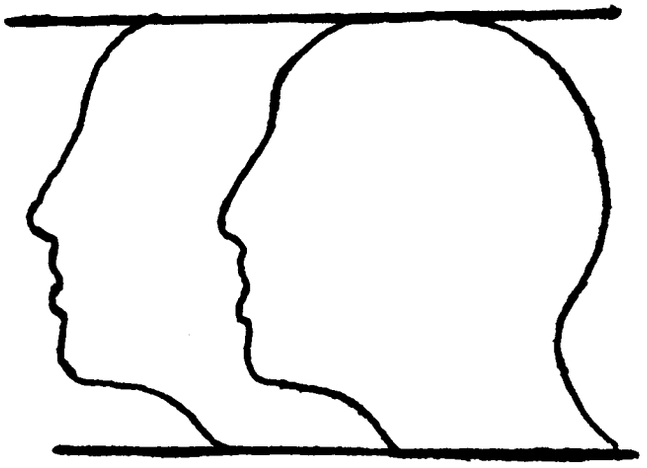
refer to a complex human phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a single origin. It is interesting, moreover, that while in this book Freud adopts a theory that regards homosexuality as a defective personal development induced by traumatic childhood experiences, he strongly insists that Leonardo da Vinci, the homosexual, was non-neurotic and creative. Most psychiatrists turn to their patients for a knowledge of homosexuality: Freud preferred to study this sexual orientation in a genius capable of transcending the pressure of society and thus arrived at a distinction, usually neglected in the Freudian school, between neurotic and non-neurotic homosexuality. This distinction, we note, is obscured by the psychiatrists who like to call homosexuality a sickness.

Despite the different theories regarding the origin of homosexuality, there is wide agreement among psychiatrists and psychologists of various schools that it is possible to distinguish *two modes* of homosexual orientation, *a phase* to be passed through and *a constant* to be lived with. In some people homosexual interest and activity appear as a temporary phenomenon, either as regression to an earlier stage of personal development or as a special response to heterosexual deprivation and other pressures. In other people, men and women, the



homosexual orientation appears deeply rooted in their personality structure. In the first case, homosexuality is a phase disguising the more basic sexual orientation of the human person; in the second, homosexuality is a constitutive element of the personality.

If this distinction is justified, it is the task of men and women who discover a homosexual inclination in themselves to discern whether they are caught in a phase which prevents them from fulfilling their real possibilities, or whether homosexuality is a constitutive element of their personality structure. It may often be difficult to make this distinction. Gay people easily turn to psychiatrists and psychologists to come to such self-discovery, but only too often do their counselors disagree among themselves. I suppose that eventually the homosexual community itself will produce tests and therapeutic insights that enable people to come to greater self-knowledge and discover whether they are constitutively homosexual.

What is the moral task of people who discover that they are basically homosexually oriented? May they affirm this inclination within themselves? In the past, we used to say that because of the unnatural direction of their drive, these people must suppress their inclination as much as possible. But since the notion of human nature, especially when applied to the relation of men and women, has become problematic, we hesitate to draw the same conclusion today. The important question, according to the reflection made above, is whether homosexuality is open to mutuality. Is the homosexual orientation capable of grounding friendship that enables the partners to grow and become more truly human? This is the crucial question. For the structure of redeemed human life is mutuality. There are gravely damaged sexual inclinations, e.g., sadism, masochism, and paedophilia, which may not be acknowledged without a struggle: for they exclude mutuality. They bind the participants in a cruel game of possessor and possessed. The important question, therefore, is whether homosexuality is open to mutuality. Can it be integrated into the kind of human life to which God summons us?

Some psychiatrists and psychologists give a negative reply to this question. Their patients have convinced them that homosexual relations give rise only to torment and unstable passions. However, we have today the witness of homosexual men and women who have struggled for self-knowledge and transcended the weight society has put on them and who tell us that their lives are based on mutuality. More specifically, we have the religious witness of Christians and Catholics that homosexuality grounds responsible sharing and sustained friendship. The theologian must take this witness seriously and may conclude that persons who are constitutively homosexual must accept their orientation and live accordingly. Homosexual love, then, is not contrary to the human nature, defined in terms of mutuality, toward which mankind is summoned.

If it is true that some people are constitutively homosexual and that homosexual relations allow for mutuality, then, from the viewpoint of Christian theology, it is the task of homosexuals to acknowledge themselves as such before God, accept their sexual inclination as their calling, and explore the meaning of this inclination for the Christian life. This is the position adopted by Dignity. Dignity holds that it is the call of Catholic homosexuals to affirm their sexual orientation in faith, to regard themselves as equal members of the believing community, and to express their sexuality in a manner consonant with Christ's teaching of love.

This theological position, I wish to add, is quite independent of any particular theory about the origin of homosexuality! For even if one wishes, following Freud,

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to regard homosexuality as a defective personal development, as a loss or lack of completeness (like having one leg or being born blind), it is still necessary for a believing homosexual to affirm himself or herself before God in faith, to accept oneself without regrets and self-pity, to reject the self-depreciation which the world imposes on him/her, and to seek a good and full life in keeping with one's basic powers.

It is necessary to add at this point that homosexual men and women are in greater need of self-knowledge and personal wisdom than other people. In our culture gay people are often gravely wounded and must wrestle with themselves before the freedom to love and to forget themselves becomes accessible to them. This can be affirmed quite apart from the unsolved question about the origin of homosexuality. For even if one denies the Freudian theory that homosexuality is caused by infantile traumata and thus accompanied by conflicts that have to be faced in later life, it is beyond dispute that society places enormous burdens on homosexuals and that it is almost impossible for persons with a homosexual orientation to grow up without being exposed to the threats and pressures of a cruel world. Wounds there are, whatever their origin. But where can gay people turn for wisdom? Who teaches them self-knowledge? The psychiatric profession and many psychologists tend to regard homosexuals as medical cases. Other psychologists adopt a permissive attitude without leading their clients to critical self-understanding. The churches have looked upon homosexuals as sinners. If gay people will ever find guidelines to free themselves from the wounds that lead to hostility and self-hatred, it will be a wisdom generated within the homosexual community itself.

This is the viewpoint adopted by Dignity. This association hopes that through open and trusting dialogue within the believing community, gay people will find the necessary guidance. There are unsolved questions about homosexuality and the viability of various forms of homosexual life, for which no one has definitive answers. Should gay people imitate the forms of heterosexual love? Or should they find their own responsible way of sharing and mutuality? Dignity trusts that the guidance granted by the Spirit within the Christian community will lead to greater insight.

It is interesting to note, from this point of view, that Dignity insists on the equality of men and women in the association and that men and women have equal representation in the various national committees. If there is among homosexuals any tendency to belittle or exclude the other sex, the Christian community ought to be the place where these divisions are overcome. Dignity reveals here a greater sensitivity to the man-woman relationship than do most organizations in the Catholic Church.

The center of the new Catholic association is faith in Jesus Christ. Dignity holds that the Christian faith offers a special strength to gay people. Since one of the main problems of homosexuals in our culture is self-rejection, guilt feelings imposed by society and the inability to say yes to themselves, the Christian message proclaiming God's acceptance of all people in Christ initiates men and women into a new self-acceptance and creates a new sense of dignity in them. This self-affirmation in faith, then, becomes the source of more positive, generous and joyful life.

While the arguments examined in these pages may have a good deal of persuasive force, it is not likely that the Catholic Church is about to change its traditional teaching. Since the organizational center of the Catholic Church is situated in a country with social and cultural conditions that differ greatly from those of North America, official Catholic teaching is often less concerned than are some other churches with the problems that emerge in our society. Thus the strict views on birth control and on remarriage after a broken union still prevail in the official teaching. It would be a mistake, it seems to me, if Dignity made an appeal to the Catholic hierarchy for special recognition. A realistic strategy, in my view, would be to create a moderate and well-founded minority position in the Catholic Church. The arguments in this article supporting the Dignity standpoint are to a large extent based on contemporary Christian witness. It would be useful to collect more pastoral experience and continue theological reflection. While the minority position adopted by Dignity will be able to help vast numbers of gay people at this time, a new approach to homosexuality by the entire Church is a matter of the distant future.

SUSAN ZEGANS

BELOW

on the still skin of water
bugs skate, ignorant of depth
deaf to my descent
here the endless echoes of the voice are stopped
words turn bubbles

millions move
out of rock slits
crusted with molluscs and lichen
millions upon millions
iridescent
blinding to beatitude, and blind
search this limpid silence
only for straits that will not jell the blood
or food beads of life to feed another life

I
a stranger
am alone transfixed
roe of fish bedded in my scalp
strands of hair, brown and matted
twisting in the arms
of pale anemones

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PEOPLE FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

JOHN C. CORT

Extending democracy to the work place

I threaded my way down the corridor, through the beards and past the tables piled high with radical literature, registered with the young lady at the door, and found a seat in the lecture hall.

A young man beside me gazed out the window at the sun shining on the snow and remarked cheerfully to his companion, "What a great day to smash the state!"

All this might have intimidated me a few months earlier, but I had grown a beard myself and was ready either to tango or to tangle. The only difference was that my beard was gray. It was a significant difference.

So began the first national conference of People for Self-Management held on January 12-13 at MIT in Cambridge, Mass., bringing together about 200 supporters and some critics of the idea that democracy should be extended to the work place. Also present were a few crazies whose four-letter rhetoric and wide-ranging abuse were directed without prejudice at anything that moved.

Average age: about 29. Maybe six people over 50.

Average sex: male. Maybe 10 percent women. Aren't women interested in work?

Average race: white. A few blacks were there from Brownsville in Brooklyn.

Average occupation: some branch of *academia*—student or teacher. Maybe ten people who had seen the inside of a trade union. Fortunately, these included Irving Bluestone, vice-president of the United Auto Workers (UAW) holding the key position of director of the union's General Motors Division, a sober, graying type, pretty intellectual for a labor leader.

Average class: middle.

Most of the organizers came from universities in the Boston area and an active group at Cornell led by Professor Jaroslav Vanek, author of several books on the subject and original founder of PSM about nine months ago. (Those interested can subscribe to the PSM newsletter by sending $1 to Mr. Vanek, Dept. of Economics, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850.)

From opening statements by Vanek and Walter Kendall, director of England's similar Institute for Workers Control at Oxford, one became quickly aware that the old idea of workers' control, or at least workers' participation in control, is an idea whose time may now have come.

Vanek (a cheerful, middle-aged Czech with full suit and tie, smooth face, not even sideburns):

"We live today in a period of serious crisis . . . the logical result of 200 years of assimilation of the workingman to the machine and his use and manipulation by others for profit."

Kendall (full mutton chops, glasses, working-class accent and Oxford don's vocabulary):

"Affluence is important but not the whole life of man. [Where did I hear that before? Ah, yes—'not by bread alone' . . .] Control in the work place remains forever, but economic gains can be eroded by inflation . . . State ownership and planning don't equal socialism. . . ."

Sign No. 1 that the '70s may be the time: an acceleration of developments in Europe, with new legislation in most of the countries of Western Europe to go with West Germany's earlier experiment (1951) with "co-determination" (*mitbestimmung*)—one-third worker representation on the "supervisory boards" of steel and coal companies. Even earlier (1950) Jugoslavia had departed from the preferred Marxist pattern and introduced *self-management*, under which workers have almost complete control of their companies. Then there's the industrial enterprises operated by the *kibbutzim* in Israel.

The most dramatic expression of the new popularity of worker control on the left was the occupation of the Lip watch factory in Besançon, France, last summer when management threatened to liquidate most of the plant and lay off 500 workers. The workers took over the factory, ran it, sold the watches and paid their own salaries. Eventually they were ousted, but not before they had captured the sympathy of the country and driven the French labor and radical movements, ordinarily so divided, into great united demonstrations of sympathy and support. We are now seeing the passage by the conservative Pompidou government of a progressive parcel of bills improving working conditions and the setting up of a commission that is actually working on legislation to outlaw the assembly line. The CFDT (formerly the Catholic labor federation) has been way ahead of the Communist CGT in support for this kind of action. *(Ed. Note: As this issue goes to*

JOHN C. CORT *has worked for labor groups and anti-poverty agencies, and is now writing a book about his life and times.*

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press, news comes that the workers at France's Lip plant have won at least a partial, compromise victory.)

Sign No. 2: a sharp upturn in the American media (books, periodicals and films) in the direction of attention given to the question of making work more meaningful and satisfying for both blue and white collars.

Much of the discussion has centered around spontaneous demonstrations of discontent such as the 22-day strike at Lordstown, Ohio, in the new Vega plant of General Motors (1972). There is also much wonderment at the European developments and a renewed interest in homegrown American schemes that have been around for some time and others that are new.

This trend has been accelerated by the general disenchantment among the radicals and intellectuals with the notion that state ownership is a panacea for what ails our industrial society. It has become evident that state-owned enterprises can be just as tough on labor as capitalist enterprises, often tougher, and that socialist factories can be just as addicted as capitalist factories to the "scientific management" theories of Frederick Taylor, father of the assembly line, which was based on the "miniaturization" of labor (a minimum of functions for each worker) and a concept of man as "a grown-up child."

And where have we heard that before, the idea of man as a grown-up child? Ah, yes—President Nixon's famous interview after his great victory in 1972.

Examples of American efforts in the direction of un-Taylorizing American industry (some of these were mentioned by speakers at MIT and others are from an excellent new book, *Job Power* by David Jenkins [Doubleday, $8.95], who is also the author of an article on the subject in the *Nation* (January 12, 1974)):

Works councils before World War II; joint productivity committees during World War II; producer cooperatives; the CIO's Industry Council Plan; the Scanlon Plan; diverse schemes at companies like Texas Instrument, Corning Glass, Monsanto, General Foods, Proctor & Gamble, McCormick & Co., and the Eaton Corporation.

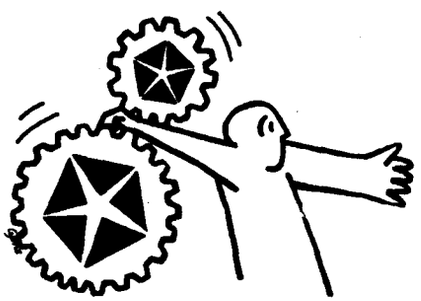
Of course, at the MIT meeting any mention of a plan involving a large corporation was sure to provoke a snort of disbelief that this could be anything but a slick device for exploiting the workers, even when it was done in cooperation with a union. The dilemma is that most of these plans are profitable for both workers and management because people work harder and better when they identify with what they are doing and derive satisfaction from it. Any plan that benefits management must be bad, even if it also benefits labor, because everybody knows that that is an iron law of economics and Marxist theology.

The fact that a union might approve was little help at MIT. Hostility toward unions was a characteristic of much of the discussion, though usually coming from the floor rather than the platform and most intense in the mouths of the far left brethren.

It flared up more brightly any time the UAW's Bluestone spoke. He had talked pretty persuasively on what the UAW had already done to abolish absolute monarchy and selfdom in the auto plants, not simply in the winning of economic gains (wages, pensions) but also in the winning of non-economic gains such as right of transfer and promotion to better jobs, seniority in layoffs, health and safety, ventilation, lighting, etc. He acknowledged that this was only a beginning and the union had a long way to go. Some quotes:

"Democratic values largely disappear once a worker goes into a plant or office and is subject to somebody standing over him and telling him what to do and how to do it.

"The whole purpose of the union is to bring democratic rights into the plant. During the 1973 negotiations, for the first time in any major industry, the UAW won agreement from GM, Ford and Chrysler to set up joint national committees to improve the quality of work life. This was not a big rank-and-file demand, but it was an issue with the leadership. Already a number of experiments are going forward and we intend to see that the successful ones are applied throughout the industry. We are watching the effort of Volvo at its new plant in Sweden to make cars without an assembly line, with just a team of workers who produce an entire car. We understand they intend to build a similar plant here in Virginia and we intend to organize that plant and keep a sharp eye on what happens there.



"I've visited the plants in Yugoslavia and I can say that, just as state ownership doesn't necessarily change the nature of the job, the same thing is true of workers' control. The jobs there are just as Taylorized and 'miniaturized' as the jobs in our own plants.

"We've got to get away from that. We've got to *de*-miniaturize these jobs, make them more complex, more interesting, so that they are soul-satisfying and self-satisfying to the workers, so that the workers feel that they are a piece of the action.

"There is a big difference between worker control and worker participation in control. Practically speaking, we have to limit ourselves to the latter. We do not have an ideological labor movement in America and American workers are not interested, by and large, in

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ideology. They are not even interested, usually, in sharing management of the entire company, even though decisions made at the company level, such as the failure to develop a small car sooner, or the merger of Fisher Body and Chevrolet into the GMAD (General Motors Assembly Division) clearly affect what happens to them where they work. The small car thing, for example, has now meant the indefinite layoff of 38,000 workers in GM and 70,000 throughout the industry.

"Managing the job, where they work, is something that our members care about and that is on the front burner as far as the UAW is concerned. We want the workers to have a significant role as decision-makers and not just decision-receivers. After we have done something about that, then we must move on to having something to say about managing the enterprise, about the big decisions on pricing, sales, the nature of the product, financing, plant distribution and contracting.

"Lordstown was over-written and largely misunderstood. Most of the trouble there arose out of the merger of Fisher Body and Chevrolet and the problem of reconciling two different contracts representing 30 years of separate operation.

"What surfaced at Lordstown was the workers' rejection of the whole idea of the assembly line.

"Ask an auto worker, 'Are you alienated?' and he wouldn't know what you are talking about, but ask him, 'Do you have a boring, monotonous, stinking job?' and he'd say, 'Yes!'

"What we're doing is trying to change the whole concept of so-called scientific jobs management that has produced the assembly line and to give the workers a chance to determine these things for themselves."

Fair enough. Bluestone comes across as a reasonable man who has an up-to-date understanding of the problems and a sincere interest in enlarging the area of collective bargaining and worker control, and through that, making industrial work more human and more creative. He may rationalize the slowness of progress in the UAW toward this goal. He may underestimate the significance of Lordstown. But on balance, not bad, and I for one am glad he holds the key position he does because believe me, friends, if he can put real live flesh and blood on those ideas at General Motors, then we are more than half way home.

At MIT, however, there were other opinions about Brother Bluestone. Several came from young men identifying themselves as members of NUWRO (North American Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization, which is affiliated with the National Caucus of Labor Committees).

First Young Man (addressing the audience and indicating speakers on platform): "Don't you see they're trying to get you to sucker the working-class into fascism? Don't you see they're trying to get you to sucker the working-class into speeding themselves up and laying themselves off? This is an idiotic child's discussion."

Second Young Man: "The leaders of the UAW are sleeping with management. They are pederasts. This is a barnyard scene. The object of this co-participation thing is to tell the workers how much shit they will eat, when they will eat shit, and for how long they will eat shit."

Several other young men, apparently from the same group, which is currently the most feverish of the radical left, threw in a few similar insults and tried to make speeches. People began to shout all over the place, mostly at the young men, requesting them to shut up and sit down. In my notebook I entered the single word, "Chaos." The chairman slowly and painfully restored order.

These young men, however rude and crude, were not alone in their contempt for American union leadership, from Meany over to Leonard Woodcock (UAW president) and everybody in between, and even for the unions themselves. Others expressed themselves more rationally, but the meaning was clear. One of the more intelligent ones, Stanley Aronowitz, had even had experience in real live unions. Quote: "The UAW is a total complete sell-out . . . Unions are more a part of the problem than a part of the solution." Elsewhere Aronowitz has written, "At first, unionization seems to be a kind of deliverance from bondage. But after the initial upsurge has been spent, most unions fall back into patterns of class collaboration and repression."

Others, charging that American unions must work within the capitalist system and have to settle for partial gains in worker control, clearly opted for all-or-nothing. Unfortunately, they could point to very little going for them in terms of actual accomplishment, outside of a few brave efforts like the Southside Community Garage in Minneapolis or the worker-owned refuse collection companies of the San Francisco Bay area.

At this point I wanted to sing, "There's a Long, Long Trail Awinding."

The second and last day of the conference a special meeting was called to discuss the relations of People for Self-Management with the union movement. Kendall had pointed out that in England, at similar meetings of his Institute, about two-thirds of those present are from the trade unions. The more reasonable types in PSM, *apparently* in the majority (note emphasis), recognize that this is a serious weakness in their organization.

About 30-40 people were present at this special meeting and the chairman asked if any were presently members of trade unions. Not one raised a hand. After half-an-hour of listening to criticism of unions and union leaders, usually in radical left language, an elderly man rose to his feet. Said he:

"It's been twelve years since I was in the labor movement, but I find myself getting angrier and angrier.

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There's an assumption here that American union leaders are guilty until proven innocent—guilty of selling out to management, guilty of betraying their members, guilty of holding their positions by corrupt, violent, or undemocratic means.

"Some are guilty. But most of you don't seem to know anything really about American unions. You don't know that federal law provides certain guarantees for honest, democratic elections and any election that violates these guarantees can be thrown out. So if a man holds an office, *unless you can prove otherwise*, the only fair assumption has to be that he is there because the rank-and-file put him there. And your quarrel is with the rank-and-file and not with the leadership.

"There are practically no American unions that are under Marxist leadership and haven't been since the Stalinist unions were thrown out of the CIO in 1949. American unions, and American workers, deal with the system as it is, not with some fantasy of what they might like it to be. And in the system as it is we find that even large corporations like General Foods and Proctor & Gamble are making some real progress toward your goal and my goal of worker control and self-management."

"Life and human nature are complex," this old man said. "There are good things happening even in the heart of dirty capitalist enterprise, even in the heart of the American labor movement. But if you refuse to accept the complexity of life and insist on a policy of all-or-nothing-at-all, you are doomed to be ineffectual."

Whether or not a realistic policy will prevail remains to be seen. A business meeting of the conference voted to set up a minimal structure for the coming year, keeping the present name at least until the next annual meeting. There was some sentiment for working "democracy" or "democratic" into the title. I favor that myself because democracy has far more dynamic and, vague as it is, far more clarity than the simple term "self-management." And isn't that really—industrial democracy—what this is all about?

I left with mixed emotions and conclusions. One was confirmed by taking home a sample of current radical literature and reading it—new left, old left and middle-aged left. Some periodicals I hadn't seen for years, others I had never seen. Time was when you were an expert if you could distinguish Cannonites from Schactmanites and both from Stalinists. Now there must be at least ten separate national Marxist parties and organizations. They keep splitting like atoms. My conclusion was that the American Marxist left is so fragmented and "miniaturized," to borrow Taylor's term, has lost so much blood from internecine warfare, and is so paralyzed by old slogans and old prejudices, that it has little time or energy left to do any constructive thinking about new approaches to the problem of worker alienation.

One man, referring to the fellows from the United Caucus of Labor Committees and its affiliate NUWRO, told me that there was a serious theory going around that the CIA was funding it because it spent so much of its time cutting up other left groups and *accusing them of being CIA-funded*. What a crazily vicious circle! Personally, I am skeptical of the theory, but you have to admit that Nixon is just weird enough to get into that kind of a circle.

Another feeling I took away with me, somewhat more hopeful, was that if somebody can sell more unions on this self-management thing, trade unionism in this country might recover the sex appeal it once had for large numbers of young idealists and which, presently, only Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers seem to retain.

There were all kinds of people at MIT. There was even one man who quoted that old radical Catholic prophet Eric Gill: "Men work best when they own and control their own tools and materials."

Hard to find the words that sum it up more quickly or more profoundly. And it's true—those words' time may have come. And it's true—People for Self-Management may be one important instrument for speeding the arrival of that time.

ITALIAN DUO

THE SCREEN

Thirteen years ago Italian director Pietro Germi made a very funny movie called *Divorce Italian Style*. It was about divorce, was very self-consciously Italian, and had lots of style. It was so successful that he followed it up with a variation on the same theme, *Seduced and Abandoned* (1964), which was equally good. What themes Germi has been dealing with since I'm not sure. Before his two international hits, he had long been making movies for domestic consumption in Italy, and he has continued to do so since *Divorce Italian Style* and *Seduced and Abandoned*. If his new international release is any indication, however, for the past decade he has simply been remaking *Divorce Italian Style* over and over. The result is that the idea has become rather shopworn.

The new film, *Alfredo, Alfredo*, takes up its story a bit earlier in the love life of its hero, but that story runs much the same course as before. In *Divorce Italian Style* Ferdinando (Marcello Mastroianni) becomes enamored of his second cousin (Stefania Sandrelli), and therefore decides he must get rid of his wife. In *Alfredo, Alfredo*, the title character (Dustin Dustin Hoffman Hoffman) first courts and marries a wife (Stefania

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Sandrelli), then acquires an *enamorata* for whom he wants to get rid of this wife. The complication in both films is that getting rid of a wife in ultra-Catholic Italy is not easy.

But it's also not as difficult nowadays as it was when Germi made this film the first time. Maybe this is why he can't make it as well this time. Happily for Italians with lax morals, but unhappily for filmmakers with black comedy in mind, Italy has adopted a divorce law since *Divorce Italian Style* was made. In the absence of such a law Ferdinando has only one course open to him: to lure his wife into infidelity so he can catch her there and shoot her, a crime for which no jury in Italy would convict. This ridiculous legal situation gave Germi a context in which the brilliant Mediterranean sun could shine on the characters' public lives while Ferdinando machinated away in dark, murky rooms closed up behind prudish Sicilian shutters. In the new film, instead of plotting a murder to get rid of his wife, Alfredo joins the lobbyists and demonstrators whose dedication is to bring about the change in Italian law which, at last, grants him a divorce. History marches on. Law replaces violence in human affairs. Boredom replaces laughter in movie theaters.

What makes *Alfredo, Alfredo* a film with international boffo is the casting of Dustin Hoffman, but ironically his role is the film's dullest element. The change in social conditions in Italy seems to have weakened and blurred Germi's characterizations. In *Divorce Italian Style*, since there can be nothing to admire in a society governed by such absurd laws, Germi could be single-minded about both the society and the people in it. Accordingly his characters run the gamut from foolish to odious, and thus an essential ingredient of satire is provided: there is a great disparity between the way we see the characters and the way they see themselves. Ferdinando is oily, doltish and idle, which might not be funny, except that when he looks in the mirror he sees himself as suave, cunning and industrious. (To emphasize this, as I recall, Germi had him look in the mirror a good deal too.) Ferdinando thinks his plans as well concealed behind his calm exterior as his private rooms are behind the shutters; but we have seen into those rooms, and seen him in his hairnet.

In the new film there is no facade for us to see behind. Alfredo is the sort of character who reveals warmth and decency behind a facade of confusion and shyness, which is to say no facade at all. With the laws and society now changed, Germi finds too much that he can sympathize with, not only in Alfredo but in his mistress as well. Too bad. Germi had so much more to say to us when he was thoroughly disgusted with them all.

It's bad enough when a director runs his own ideas into the ground, as Germi has, but it's even worse when he makes a shambles of ideas he's stolen from someone else. This is what Salvatore Samperi has done in *Malizia*, and in fact Germi is one of the directors whose ideas he's stolen. From Germi Samperi has copied the ambience of Sicilian hypocrisy, the show of piety and decorum barely covering a total absorption in lust. From the study of adolescent sexuality in Louis Malle's *Murmur of the Heart* Samperi has lifted the rudiments of his scenario, which deals with a teenage boy's desire to dominate sexually a housekeeper whom his widowed father wants to marry. And from Bernardo Bertolucci Samperi has stolen a director of photography, Vittorio Storaro. That amber, late-afternoon lighting which Storaro created to serve Bertolucci's symbolic purposes in *Last Tango* is here recreated to no apparent purpose at all. Photography, script, *mise en scène*: there isn't really anything else left. Samperi has swiped from other directors just about everything in his movie. One of his characters even ends up in Ferdinando's hairnet.

The one innovation Samperi probably feels he's making is in the character of Nino (Alessandro Momo), the teenager who's supposed to be sexually precocious because he has the desires of a dirty old man. Samperi is gambling that if gross jokes are done with children, somehow their innocence will offset the prurience of the joke—will make us laugh at sights from which we would otherwise cringe. But Momo makes such an arrogant Priapus, we dislike him too thoroughly to care what age he is. Certainly his actions live up to the film's title, *Malizia*, which means malice in Italian. What Samperi doesn't seem to realize, as Germi once did, is that the style of the director's malice matters much more. Some of the staff who have seen this film at Paramount, which is distributing it, privately refer to it as "Malaria." A publicity department that could come up with copy like that all the time really could get along without reviewers.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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JAMES SULLIVAN

ENDURING ADMIRATION

Enduring admiration is not hard.
Vitalities, like flowers in the yard,
Enjoy increase proportional to sun.
Let your life be increased by everyone
You know, for if they love you as I do,
Nobody knows how much sun shines on you.

Gray days are also good because the rain
Required by the planet and the pain
All people seem to need some of become
Vitality-producing in the sun.
Endure this admiration, let it be
Sun on a being which is sun to me.

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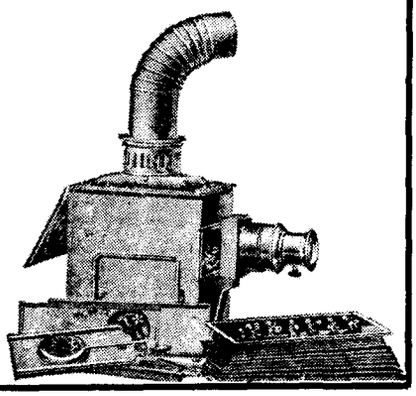
MOVIES YOU DON'T GET A CHANCE TO SEE

BRUCE COOK



At last we have a chance to test the myth. *The All-American Boy*, a first film by Charles Eastman which features Jon Voight in the title role, finally opened in New York to—as they say—mixed reviews. Did I say *finally*? How long is that? About three years, as it turns out. Not that it was so long in preparation or production. No, three years is how long the distributor, Warner Brothers, held it back before breaking loose at last and allowing us a look at a movie which by then had achieved mythic status.

The first I learned of *The All-American Boy* was at a screening of *The Summer of '42*, toward the end of 1970. After the feature, Warner's slipped in a so-called "product reel" —extended previews of Warner Brothers films in various stages of completion that would be offered in the coming year. Among them, tucked between *Klute* and *The Great Medicine Ball Caravan* was *The All-American Boy*. It looked interesting. There was an arresting authenticity to the gym sequence we were shown. And as the promising young boxer, Jon Voight—heavier, thicker, sullen-looking—was altogether different from the boyish Jon Voight seen the year before in *Midnight Cowboy*.

After that—nothing. It was not distributed, as promised, in 1971, nor in 1972. Eventually, rumors began to circulate. On the one hand, it was said that *The All-American Boy* was an absolute classic and that its writer-director Charles Eastman was a real novelist in film, an artist whose genius would be proclaimed as soon as Warner Brothers at last saw fit to release it. For their part, Warner's let it out quietly that they had previewed the film in Westwood (that most hip of the Hollywood suburbs), and that the results had been disastrous—audience walkouts, etc.

Adding to the myth and contributing to Eastman's underground reputation was the publication of the screenplay (complete with production stills from the movie nobody had seen) by Farrar, Straus & Giroux early this year. It was an impressive piece of work: there could be no doubt about that. But did it mean that *The All-American Boy* was the masterpiece it was rumored to be? Maybe and maybe not. As Malcolm McDowell once put it with aphoristic brevity: "There are no great scripts, only great movies." Still, reading this one, with its story of a kid who runs from success, love and permanence, one certainly had the feeling that a great movie *could* be made from it.

But now, for me at least, the suspense is over. I had a chance to see *The All-American Boy* when it opened in New York in the latter part of October. Charles Eastman evidently talked the studio into letting him edit the feature down to some manageable length himself and satisfied them with the result. It must have helped, too, that Jon Voight had had a resounding success last year with *Deliverance*, also a Warner Brothers film.

Is *The All-American Boy* a great film? No. And while this is not the time or the place to offer detailed criticism, I think it should be made clear that while it does not fulfill the hopes inspired by the myth that had grown up around it (no movie, I think, could), this one is nevertheless a very good piece of work, one that any director could be proud of as his first try at a feature. It has style and the sense of a specific vision that you only get from directors with real and estimable talents.

The point is, it is a movie worth seeing, and for a while there it looked as though it might never be seen at all. Some are not, after all. That's right: as costly as movies are to make today, it is still true that distributors would prefer to hang onto certain of them indefinitely, rather than gamble the additional expense of ads, screenings and publicity which national release entails. As a result, there are certain films that are seen by nobody except the executives in their private screening rooms; when they turn thumbs down, we may lose our chance ever to vote at the box office.

A few specific examples: *A Fan's Notes*, an interesting novel by Frederic Exley and certainly one of the best first novels published in years, was made into a movie by Paramount—but it was never released. Zero Mostel, coming off his success in *The Producers*, journeyed to Japan to do a comedy-mystery, *Mastermind*, in which he played a Japanese detective, a kind of Mr. Moto-for-laughs; United Artists financed the film but has never let it be shown. MGM spent millions on *The Horsemen*, adapted by Dalton Trumbo from the Joseph Kessel novel and directed by John Frankenheimer, but didn't think enough of it to release it in America (though it has been exhibited in Europe). *Born to Win*, the only American film made by Czech director Ivan Passer, featured George Segal and Karen Black and was not at all a bad film. I happen to have seen it at the New York Film Festival in 1971; that was the only time Columbia permitted it to be shown. And then there is *Deadhead Miles*, which had Alan Arkin as a hapless trucker pursued by hijackers in a script by young Terence Malick (of *Badlands* fame);

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this one featured a soundtrack of Country & Western trucking songs sung by such stalwarts as Dave Dudley and Tom T. Hall. There are more. Any reviewer has a list of movies about which he has heard tantalizing rumors but never seen.

Some films are withheld from theater release and then sold directly to television. That was the fate of *Picasso Summer*, a film developed from a Ray Bradbury short story which starred Albert Finney. This was evidently what happened to *The Night of the Following Day*, a movie with Marlon Brando, Rita Moreno, and Richard Boone which showed up recently on the tube —though a friend of mine swears he saw this one the year it was made (1969) in a theater in Columbia, Missouri.

That's just it, you see. Distributors can claim that a movie has been released if it has played anywhere at all and—who knows?—perhaps some of these I have cited have played some theater or other to satisfy contractual obligations, or whatever. Brian De Palma's *Get to Know Your Rabbit*, for instance, was a movie with a myth of its own: a work by a brilliant director with a cast that included Orson Welles and Tommy Smothers. It was on everyone's list of the greatest unreleased films of all time until Warner's let it escape this fall; it played a few theaters as the bottom half of a double bill with *Blume in Love*. Richard Brooks' *The Happy Ending*, had a big cast and was a pretty good movie, as I understand from somebody who saw it in one of the grind houses on 42nd Street in New York. And ironically, though the film never got anywhere, a song written for it by Michel LeGrand certainly did: "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life" has become practically a standard in just a few years. Then there was Joseph Losey's *Figures in a Landscape*, with Robert Shaw and Malcolm McDowell: it opened in New York, failed to get the right sort of reviews in the dailies, and was pulled after three days, never to be heard from again.

And so on. But rather than multiply examples, let me draw a conclusion or two. First of all, it should be evident that the situation I have outlined is a bad one. While distributors may claim, and probably with some truth, that they are just saving us from a lot of poorly-made, unsalvageable trash, still the occasional good movie that does slip through the gates—and *The All-American Boy* is a perfect example—leads us to suspect that there may be others trapped in there that would prove just as good, if only we had the chance to see them.

Secondly, evidence mounts that the movie distributors don't know what they're up to anyway. The handling given *The Last American Hero* is a case in point. This was a fine and honest film based on Tom Wolfe's long article on stock-car racer Junior Johnson. It had good feeling for the persons, places and events it described, a sense of immediacy and authenticity that established it as a first-rate piece of work. What sort of treatment was it given? The 20th Century-Fox sales department took one look, saw that it had to do with stock-car racing, and pushed it for the drive-ins. After it had played around in the Midwest and South, a week—and one week only—came open at a New York theater in the summer—and so they rammed it in and out just so they could say it had had a New York opening. What happened? It got terrific reviews, astonishing the Fox sales people and forcing them to reassess their treatment of the film. Subsequently, they opened it on the West Coast with plenty of fanfare and big ads with lots of quotes.

Something similar happened last year to a good movie made in Australia called *Outback*. It was booked in and out of a 57th Street house in Manhattan very quickly, probably to fill out a lame run—so quickly that it was unable to benefit from the good reviews it got. Pauline Kael, for one, gave it a most quotably respectful notice, but of course it did the film no good, for by the time that issue of the *New Yorker* had appeared, *Outback* had folded its tent and stolen off to limbo.

In this case, however, there is a bit more to tell, for *Outback* was rescued briefly from limbo for a week's run at a new and different little theater in New York, the First Avenue Screening Room. There, unusual films, uncommercial films, and films that simply may not have been permitted the chance they deserve the first time round, are given a week's run. This may satisfy film buffs, and now and then give new life to a movie that deserves it, but it shouldn't be supposed for a minute that the situation is changed by the First Avenue Screen Room, or by the many repertory cinemas located around college campuses across the country, or by those university film societies. They sometimes help rescue films and are in themselves signs of hope, but they are certainly not solutions to the problem.

What is the problem? It is movie distribution. The faults of the present setup provide the key to most of the things wrong with movies today. It is not that the major distributors (Paramount, United Artists, Warner Brothers, *et al.*) are so strong that they can afford to throw movies away, but on the contrary because they are in such a position of weakness with regard to theater-owners that they feel they cannot offer for sale what the latter will not gladly buy. Right now it is a buyer's market, and no mistake. And neither buyer nor seller trusts the other much. It has become an annual tradition for the two sides to get together at the convention of the National Association of Theater-Owners and denounce one another as crooks—and both are probably right. Competition from television, however, forces the two sides to cooperate.

It was not always so, of course. Distributors were firmly in control before television, and back, too, before antitrust suits forced the majors to divest themselves of their own theater chains and to desert the time-honored practice of "block-booking." What was block-booking? It was a practice whereby distributors sold their films in multiple-picture package deals. In other words, if in 1944 you wanted to book a potential big money-maker like *National Velvet* from MGM, to frame a not terribly far-fetched example, you had also to

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agree to take the same studio's *Between Two Women* and *Barbary Coast Gent*, a bomb and a B-movie.

But block-booking wasn't all bad. It gave studios the chance to develop talent on their B-movie schedules. It allowed prestige pictures to be made from which studios never really expected to clear a profit. And finally block-booking made it possible for a film maker to fail, to learn from his failure, and then come back to work to do a better job next time.

Now, of course, this is no longer possible. Where studios were also able to secure bank loans on a block basis in the days of block-booking, they must now finance on a movie-to-movie basis, presumably submitting scripts to loan officers for approval. As a result, in making a movie today, everybody swings from the heels and tries to hit a home run each time he gets to the plate. And why not? If he doesn't connect he may never come to bat again. That's right, it's become increasingly difficult for a director, a writer, or an actor to build or maintain a career because no achievement they can point to in the distant past looms quite as large as the gross of their last picture. The standard is, What have you done for me lately? This is obviously a situation that does not encourage anyone to do his artistic best.

Am I leading up to a plea for a return to block-booking, distributor-owned theater chains, and all the other monopolistic and semi-monopolistic movie industry practices of the past? Of course not. Even if I thought them desirable—and I don't—the competition of television would not permit them.

What is the answer then? Nobody seems to know. Recent mergers of facilities and distribution networks—Columbia into Warner Brothers and MGM into United Artists—may be steps in the right direction, though these seem now to have come a bit late in the game. Closer cooperation by theater-owners would help, of course, and perhaps something as basic as a return by them to the old double-feature format would be enough to rescue the industry from its present predicament. Something had better be done, though, and in a hurry, or the movies you don't get a chance to see may simply be all those they don't show on TV.

BOOKS

THE GREAT ANTIQUITIES RIP-OFF

FRANK GETLEIN

The Plundered Past

KARL E. MEYER

Atheneum, $12.95

Karl E. Meyer has written the first book of ethics for an area of human activity which has been practiced without any ethics at all for millennia.

It is still so practiced and on an increasing scale and tempo rather than a decreasing one, but what is amazing and hopeful is that for the first time some of the institutions and professional societies involved are actually subscribing to statements of principles which renounce many of the practices by which members of the societies have, from time immemorial (a period, in this country, of from a century to a century and a half or so) gained fame in their profession and the gratitude of the institutions which employed them.

As subtitles do, the subtitle here reduces the epic sweep of the title to a manageable compass, one not inconceivable, even, as the theme of some future television series: "The story of the illegal international traffic in works of art."

As we are finding out in the case of Robert Vesco, an American national resource the Costa Ricans refuse to surrender to us, it takes two sides in agreement to make international traffic in anything effectively illegal. If the Costa Ricans now are perversely giving Vesco sanctuary from the long arm of Yankee justice, it may be argued that their uncooperative attitude is the true reflection, indeed the miniature reflection, of Yankee attitudes which have, for decades, allowed—even encouraged—Costa Rican national treasures to be wrenched from their jungle sites, sawn up for easier smuggling and shipping, and sent up here to adorn what have been until recently the most respected of American institutions, our museums.

Costa Rica has a special interest in pre-Columbian archaeology because, as the geography indicates, it was a natural meeting place for the great cultures to the north and to the south. The country is interesting, too, in terms of Karl Meyer's study. He quotes an expert estimate that, in a population of a million and a half there are almost 4,500 active *huaqueros*, or grave-robbers. The expert, archaeologist Dwight Heath who was stationed at the University of Costa Rica in 1968-69, further extrapolated that if the support echelons of grave-robbing are counted, the merchants, street vendors and restorers, "It is altogether possible that there are more part-time commercial archaeologists in a country the size of West Virginia than there are academically trained (so-called 'professional') archaeologists in the entire world!"

These *huaqueros* do what their colleagues in Greece and Turkey, in India and Indonesia, in Indochina and Iraq, in Egypt and Italy, do and have always done: they dig up the past of their land, in some cases of their people, and sell it to strangers. From the related points of view of ethics

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and piety, they are in much the same position as that of the genteelly impoverished British or European aristocrat who, never having been trained to earn his bread, gains it by selling his grandfather, in oil or marble, along with the other oils and bronzes his grandfather assembled from other people's grandfathers to amuse himself. The *huaqueros,* however, are much less well paid for their breach of piety, they work hard in order to commit it, and what they are destroying is, in many cases, much more nearly irreplaceable than anyone's last duchess there on the wall.

It is the irreplaceability that lends passion to Meyer's cool and comprehensive reporting on the "traffic."

The reporting is superb. Meyer has traveled to most of the places he is writing about and talked at length to many of the people involved, from museum professionals in America, until quite recently the ultimate receivers of the most spectacular of the stolen goods, to archaeologists, grave-robbers and dealers on or near the locations. One result is that the account is full of small details that give often ironic reality to the system and its cure that Meyer is mainly concerned with outlining. For instance, in the case of the Euphronios krater that was such a triumph for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and its curator of antiquities, Dietrich von Bothmer, whose triumph turned to ashes when he found himself assailed by his profession as the receiver of stolen goods he obviously was, Meyer notes that the Bierut shop of the ultimate source of the krater, Dikran Sarrafian, contains no other treasures remotely comparable. He quotes the Armenian coin-dealer's beautiful *envoi,* "I have wasted most of my life with whores and archaeologists," and he explodes one small redoubt in the Met's defensive line. The museum had said that the krater became available because the owner—who turned out to be Sarrafian—planned to retire and go to New South Wales. Meyer, in a footnote, gives the information that "New South Wales" is a Lebanese idiom for an unknown or unrevealed destination, similar to the American use of Shangri-la during and after World War II.

In half a dozen appendices, Meyer greatly enhances the value of the book by offering such things as a list of the world's most endangered archaeological sites; a table of national protective laws; a list of major thefts in the field for the last 60 years; lists of looted Central American sites; reports and recommendations by museums, and related professional groups urging their memberships to sin no more; treaties and the UNESCO Convention now presumably governing the trade; and, in some ways the most devastating thing in a book about devastation, the complete transcript of the appearance of Metropolitan director Thomas Hoving and Dietrich von Bothmer, with the Euphronios krater, on the "Today" television program, complete with Barbara Walters asking—and getting an evasive answer—whether von Bothmer calls it a "vaz" or a "väz." As Meyer notes dryly, "Mr. Hoving's own words convey the tone and the flavor of the Metropolitan's outlook during his tenure."

Meyer goes out of his way to be fair to the parties on all sides. After all, von Bothmer was caught in a kind of time warp. The coup with the krater turned into a caper precisely because his professional colleagues were already having the second thoughts about the traffic that have inspired this book. A generation earlier, perhaps a decade earlier, he would have been the culture hero to his colleagues—with very few exceptions—that he was to Barbara Walters. Thus dealers, curators and collectors are quoted along such familiar lines as: if they didn't do it, someone else, probably a Japanese, would; or if they didn't do it, the stuff would be destroyed by time, nature and acts of casual vandalism; or, if they didn't do it, the stuff would simply remain lost in the jungle or under the earth and not be subject to scholarly study and consequent enlargement of human knowledge.

Meyer accepts scholarship as the ultimate good in this field and for all

now that it's in the open
we need to understand and deal with it

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practical purposes he is right. But, he points out that scholarship is ill-served by the wholesale destruction of ancient monuments or their scatteration throughout the world.

He does not raise the question of the rights of the dead who created the tombs being robbed and from whose point of view the most meticulous UNESCO-sponsored archaeologist is no less reprehensible a robber than the humblest *huaquero*. Indeed, the case could be made that, in Central America at least, the *huaquero* is, to some degree, a descendant of the indigenous dead, therefore their charge, their dependent entitled, in a way, to live off his ancestors, while the archaeologist is the looting stranger.

Politics, Medicine & Christian Ethics: A Dialogue with Paul Ramsey

CHARLES E. CURRAN

Fortress, $6.95

Medical Ethics

BERNARD HARING;
GABRIELLE L. JEAN

Fides, $8.95

DAVID HOLLENBACH

These are two good books by two of the most notable contemporary Catholic moral theologians. But they are perplexing books, and the perplexity rises from a source considerably more hidden and mysterious than the occasional flaws in the language or logic of the authors.

Let me try to explain by way of anecdote. Several months ago the *New England Journal of Medicine* published an article in which two physicians recounted why they and the parents of some two-score infants with severe birth defects had decided to withhold treatment and allow the infants to die. The *NEJM* article was picked up by the national media and a controversy ensued. One attempt to bring light from the heat of the situation was a meeting on the Yale campus which brought together the physicians, campus ministers and several specialists in ethics. Three aspects of that meeting stand out in my mind.

First, after hearing the physicians speak about how they reached their decisions, most of those present, including myself, were in agreement with their basic approach. Second, the only two ethical "authorities" mentioned in the discussion were an American bishop noted for his very traditional viewpoints and Joseph Fletcher of *Situation Ethics* fame. And finally, one of the campus ministers stated his conclusion that it would be safer for society and for our sanity to follow intuition and avoid the formulation of principles in such domains of tragedy. In an interesting twist of the usual argument against moral rules, he expressed fear that in the borderlands of moral insight principles would open the way to a dangerous permissiveness.

The two books have very different styles and purposes. Curran is engaged in an exercise of ethical exposition and criticism. His is a book by an ethicist, about the thought of an ethicist (Paul Ramsey), written for other ethicists. Curran studies Ramsey's careful analyses of a variety of political questions. More to the point in this context, he discusses Ramsey's views on a whole series of medical ethical questions such as abortion, experimentation with human subjects, transplants, the distribution of medical resources, the definition of death, care for the dying, euthanasia, and the ethical issues connected with advances in genetics. Curran's analysis moves on several levels. He probes the theological foundations of Ramsey's ethics, and finds too great a stress on the doctrines of eschatology and sin at the expense of the goodness of creation and the intrinsic worth of the human. He chafes against Ramsey's heavy stress on the need for rules and order as a restriction on the responsive, developmental nature of human freedom. And perhaps most basically, Curran engages Ramsey repeatedly on the question of the distinctive contribution of Christian faith to moral discernment. On the last point Curran waffles. At times he maintains that the Christian relies on the same sources of moral wisdom as does the non-Christian, while at others he stresses the distinctive insight provided by a Christian doctrine of man and God's redemptive action in the world.

It is surely unfair to call Curran's hesitancy or lack of clarity on this question of distinctiveness waffling, for he is struggling with a problem (mystery?) which has dominated the history of moral theology from its beginnings in the New Testament. But consider the issue in the light of the meeting concerning the infants who were allowed to die. The physicians are groping their way through their decisions with what human wisdom they can muster. The ministers urge compassion, sensitivity, love. Is the role of the ethicist simply one of commending the physicians in their struggle and of calling the ministers to continue the proclamation of the message of loving concern? Curran does not stop here. He goes a long way toward providing the kind of moral guidelines that can both help the physicians and families of the infants to discern the call of human obligation and point the way for the ministers in their attempt to speak to the immediate needs of the situation. But there is a wholeness—an integrity—missing in Curran's approach. He doesn't quite have his theology, his moral rules and his reading of the medical situations *together*. Perhaps this is inevitable. It is also my bet that it is the reason the far less adequate but considerably simpler approaches of the traditional bishop and his polar opposite Fletcher were cited while Curran was not. We need the kind of new casuistry that Curran, Ramsey and others are trying to create. But it will not have the cogency and visibility essential for getting beyond the realm of debate among ethicists until it is based on a solid foundation in integrated and contemporary Christian humanism. To achieve this goal Christian ethics needs a greater spark from the religious imagination than Curran or anyone else has provided so far.

Häring's book comes close to being a medical ethics textbook. But by con-

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trast with the tightly worked examples of this genre from the recent past, it reflects the fluid state of both medicine and ethics in its open and probing spirit. It is one of Häring's best books. He is at his most suggestive in the opening pages where he discusses the need for a "resacralization" of medicine, centered on the sanctity of the total human person rather than the Hippocratic vision of a sacralized *physis*. Also important are his remarks on the ethical challenges born of the increasing "socialization" of all aspects of life, including medicine. This developing situation demands not only new ethical principles but a medical ethos sustained by physicians' efforts to establish with patients "that personal relationship so necessary for an ambience of healing."

A brief chapter on theology's contribution to medical ethics provides the framework for Häring's treatment of the array of special problems from abortion to euthanasia. The theological perspective proves most operative in his discussion of the relation between psychotherapy and the meaning-vacuum experienced by so many silent sufferers today. Here Häring relies heavily on the theories of Viktor Frank and other "third force" psychologists. But in this area, as in others such as his treatment of abortion, he closes his discussion just as it is beginning to come to some crucial points.

Häring's book reveals another aspect of my perplexity. In seeking to cover the whole range of medical ethical questions from a theological point of view, must one have succumbed to a bad case of hubris? Häring's approach and style indicate that he has not. But the incompleteness of so much of what he says about profoundly human needs and problems lends a certain *prima facie* plausibility to the view of the man at our meeting who preferred intuition to "permissive principles." This, however, is a counsel of despair if we are to hold on to a minimum of intelligent freedom at the edges of our society where men and women are suffering in mind and body.

Religious imagination, theological depth, scientific sophistication, sensitivity to social complexity and awareness of changing medical needs—these things are all essential for an adequate Christian medical ethic. But the integration of all this between the covers of a book or two is too much to ask of Charles Curran or Bernard Häring. This is not a task for one or two men. It is a task for a church. And this is the root source of my perplexity. Will these books form part of the dialogue that could lead Catholicism with all its hospitals, doctors, nurses, chaplains, theologians and, yes, its bishops, to the communal task of healing the bodies and hearts of so many? The present state of affairs is not cause for a sanguine affirmative reply. Curran and Häring need help to overcome the limits of their own perspectives and roles. Those who are willing to help not only them but the church and the sick would do well to read these books with critical receptiveness.

Judith and Other Stories

JAMES T. FARRELL

Doubleday, $7.95

ROBERT PHILLIPS

It astounds to learn that this is Farrell's forty-seventh published book. But perhaps it should be more astonishing to learn it is also his fourteenth short story collection. What other serious writer of fiction in America has published that many stories?

And while Farrell's stories often present many of the same themes and characters from his novels, there are examples when the shorter form is the more successful. He has a way of perceiving the hidden occasions of success or failure (more often of failure,

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REVIEWERS

FRANK GETLEIN, Critic-at-Large of the *Washington-Star-News*, is the author of *The Politics of Paranoia* and *Playing Soldier—A Diatribe*, among others.

FATHER DAVID HOLLENBACH, S.J., is a Ph. D. candidate in Religious Studies, concentrating on Christian Social Ethics.

ROBERT PHILLIPS' *Moonstruck: An Anthology of Lunar Poetry*, will be published this month by Vanguard.

MARK TAYLOR teaches in the English Department at Manhattan College.

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in Farrell) which are the kernel of good short stories, and transmuting them through his own unmistakable vision and voice.

As a theorist of the short story form, however, Farrell seems to sell himself short. "You've written books with warmth," the wife of Tom Carroll, a Farrell alter-ego says in one of these new tales. "But people can only get so much out of a book, Tom. They can't get the warmth of a man out of his books. They must get it out of him."

Wrong. In the best short stories, as Sean O'Faolain has shown, one encounters a combination of both plausibility and personality. Without the charge of personal voltage, we get the yarn and not the man. Fortunately, there is plenty of Farrellian warmth in *Judith and Other Stories*, and it is as much for this distinctive, communicated personality so many of us continue to read him, as it is for his objective recording of an historical time and place.

Yet the voice sounds more autumnal here—as it well might: Farrell will be 70 this month. As before, the elementary forces of the universe still provide the drama and the tension. But that pertains to plot only. The personality informing the plots seems mellower. The themes of the volume are the death of love and feeling in the world (a death Farrell sees as far worse than physical death), and the humiliation of pain to man. As Farrell concludes in one story, "Pain was a symbol of man's biological tragedy," a notion he explored to great lengths in his last novel, *Invisible Swords*.

Thus, *Judith and Other Stories* is a gallery of characters for whom the peak of life is passed, if it were ever attained at all—people reviewing their pasts in what Farrell here calls "the memory of lost ecstasies." There is Tom Carroll, experiencing the deaths a man dies before he finally expires; Bill Eliot, who "expected something he would never get. He waited for news that wouldn't come"; Eddie Ryan, who, in one story, comprehends too well the violence of frustration, and in another, muses upon "the sad, tragic destiny of people"; and Tom Langley (who might just as well be named Tom Carroll or Eddie Ryan—all three are barely-disguised Jim Farrells) who realizes, "Life was full of farewells . . . and one farewell would be the final farewell."

The settings range from New York to Paris to Rome and even on to Jerusalem—some distance from the Chicago Farrell is often accused of writing about exclusively. But the Farrellian vision of a struggle between the will and the passions, with the passions always winning, remains much the same as in his first book, *Young Lonigan*, published in 1932.

A collection of eleven restatements, then, this book will reward Farrell fans. Especially of interest are the title novella, tracing love's trajectory when the couple are each more faithful to their artistic careers than to one another; "Mr. Austin," which concludes with a fine grim irony worthy of Thomas Hardy; and "Only Tomorrow and Tomorrow," the tale of a latter-day Richard Corey, whose apparent sense of superiority creates a barricade between his inferiority-ridden self and others.

His story sets the tone for the entire book:

"All life narrows down to one mortal career, and all the many promises of youth prove to have been illusions, not promises."

IN BRIEF

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH FICTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, *by Nicolaus Mills, Indiana University Press, $5.95.* The generic distinction between British and American fiction of the last century —that the former can be described as *novels* of manners whose motives and investigations are predominantly social, whereas the latter, whose authors lacked the comforts and traditions of an established society, took the form of *romances* that are abstract, visionary, and mythic—has been regarded as a critical commonplace since its formulation, a couple decades ago, by Lionel Trilling and others. It is Nicolaus Mills' thesis, rigorously argued, that the distinction sets up theoretical categories into which real books simply won't fit, and a comparative examination of the two fictions, which he finds a more sensible approach than an insistence on genres, will reveal, for example, that social context is no less important to *Huckleberry Finn* than to *Great Expectations*, or that the ideational dimension of Melville's *Pierre* exists also in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. Fine, and the detailed readings of eight novels with which Mr. Mills supports his position are outstanding. After all his polemics and practical demonstrations of the value of comparison, however, Mr. Mills startlingly reverses field and, his own evidence to the contrary, concedes his opponents' point that, after all, American fiction *is* visionary and British fiction *is* societal (as if he wished to disguise this concession, he grants it, on page 27 and again on page 111, in an obfuscatory, academic language that the rest of the book is happily free of), a puzzling reinforcement rather than repudiation of the generic stance.

MARK TAYLOR

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 475)

in some isolated places, and a few seminaries *do* accept women students, though of course not as candidates for orders. But these remain dim lights in the overall darkness of the situation. Also, lest Ms. Henning's report seem universal, there are *some* priests who can easily accept the idea of women as priests and who are not afraid of associating with women: hopefully, there are more than any of us realize.

The main opposition to women-as-priests may come down to a power struggle. Priests may simply be afraid of losing prestige and may really believe, due to various myths, that women would give the Church over to chaos.

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But some priests see little difference between new approaches and chaos.

So the only course is indeed political. Ms. Henning's call to nuns (most of whom probably prefer "sisters") is the place to start. The willingness for healthy innovation and the sheer energy of some sisters leaves many of us clergy with the rear guard. We can only hope that women will indeed "organize nationally, criticize sharply, scold severely, and demand unwaveringly," that the Church grow up. And, since we men are part of the immature Church, hopefully some of us will join in the struggle. It is a struggle; it can be nothing else.

(REV.) TOM ZELINSKI, OFM CAP.

Bronx, N.Y.

To the Editors: Both of your long overdue articles on Women and the Church in the January 11, 1974 issue accurately reflect the feelings of many Catholic women of being suppressed by their Church.

Yes, there is a need for a group of organized Catholic women to start making loud demands that the Church respond to the changed structure of society. But to define this group only as a pressure force to have women ordained is too narrow. We must take the example from other feminist organizations who see their function as being supportive to other women also trying to determine their identity.

The young Catholic woman today who has rejected the "passivity" philosophy of the Church, consequently finds herself with no place to turn to in a time of need. Formerly, such a place would have been the Church. But what does the young woman find there—the priest, an older man with a definition of womanhood already conditioned by his role and sex; and the nun, a woman who must be regarded as some degree removed from the pressures upon women outside the convent. The only alternative for the young Catholic woman is the secular women's groups which, while being sympathetic, are not always representative. As Catholic feminists must the only organization we are able to identify ourselves with be one that also supports abortion as one of its fundamental principles?

For these reasons the role of the Catholic women's group the authors call for must be twofold: Working for the rights of women in the Church and providing an alternative to compensate for the pastoral-like services the Church has failed to provide. There are places to seek information about the cause of feminism and the Church can counsel about problems of faith but isn't it about time we had an organization that can meet both needs as one?

RITA F. CIOLLI
Fordham University

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Chicago, Ill.

To The Editors: Re Margaret Langhans Luskey's "A Portrait of the Woman as a Girl Catholic": Why is it that articles by some Catholic women about women in the Church, women out of the Church, women in the priesthood, women in the Vatican, women in the vestibule, women on the altar, women off the altar, women here in the Church, women there in the Church, women everywhere in the Church, women nowhere in the Church, etc. are generally so banal and almost shivering in bathos? It seems to happen over and over again these days. And, unfortunately, Miss Luskey's contribution to the fribble is another example. After reading such pointless efforts one is reminded of G. K. Chesterton's observations about people who have no backs to their heads.

Though I suppose that I sympathize with this profoundly pitiful "girl Catholic" who so nobly endured the unbelievable anxieties of school days, I am persuaded that she alas, poor dear, failed to grasp and to learn the obvious: that Holy Mother Church expects even a "girl Catholic" *to think* and to be joyful in that responsibility.

(MS.) M. J. CALKINS

Not Only, But Also

Saxton's River, Vt.

To the Editors: Ralph Thibodeau's moving and beautiful memorial to Pablo Casals, touching the greatness of man and artist [December 14], was worth a brief editorial correction. To label "only," is risky and can exclude unjustly. Surely the *Catholic Worker,* as early and as consistently as *Commonweal* "criticized the Franco regime and the official recognition of it by the democracies."

MARJORIE MURPHY

Ed. Note: Absolutely right.

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